

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:PDW/LAB

APPROVED BY P:PCHABIB

AID:DPARKER

D/HA:FSIEVETS (INFORMED)

NEA:ALATHERTON,JR.

S:HCOLUMNS

S/S:LREDDY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 231687 TOSEC 270366

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: SPECIAL U.S. PROGRAMS
FOR LEBANON (S/S NO.7619679)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM HABIB

1. PROBLEM:

PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE, YOU ASKED FOR RECOMMENDATIONS ON:

(A) HOW WE MIGHT RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM THE CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON FOR WHEAT, A COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY, AND FUEL; AND (B) WHAT WE SHOULD DO TO SUPPORT SARKIS AFTER HIS INAUGURATION. WHILE MANY IMPLEMENTING DETAILS REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT, WE NEED YOUR GUIDANCE ON THE APPROACH OUTLINED BELOW BEFORE WE PROCEED TO SET VARIOUS ACTIONS IN MOTION.

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2. ACTION RECOMMENDED:

THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOLLOWING POLICY GUIDELINES AND SPECIFIC STEPS FOR A SPECIAL LEBANESE PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC,

HUMANITARIAN, AND RELIEF ASSISTANCE KEYED TO SUPPORT OF
PRESIDENT SARKIS:

(A) BASIC POLICY STRATEGY: WHATEVER WE DO--WHETHER IT INVOLVES A CONTINUATION OF OUR PRESENT HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS (AID TO THE AMERICAN HOSPITAL IN BEIRUT AND TO THE ICRC) OR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AND EXPANDED PROGRAMS IN OTHER FIELDS SUCH AS FOOD ASSISTANCE--SHOULD BE FOCUSED TO THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE EXTENT ON SARKIS AS THE CONSTITUTIONALLY-ELECTED CHIEF OF STATE AND AS THE PIVOT AROUND WHICH THE COUNTRY COULD BE REUNITED. IN EFFECT, WE WOULD BE CASTING A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF SARKIS TO ACHIEVE A SETTLEMENT AND REUNIFY LEBANON. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WOULD TAKE CARE TO ENSURE THAT OUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS RESPOND TO GENUINE, DEMONSTRABLE HUMANITARIAN AND RELIEF NEEDS, WHICH THEY NOW DO. IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THIS WOULD MEAN, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT WHEAT WHICH THE CHRISTIANS HAVE REQUESTED WOULD HAVE TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO BOTH SIDES, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF SARKIS AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. FORMAL AGREEMENTS REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT SUCH PROGRAMS WOULD BE MADE WITH SARKIS OR OFFICIALS HE HAS DESIGNATED. PUBLICITY WE GIVE TO SUCH PROGRAMS SHOULD AIM AT REINFORCING OUR CONCENTRATION ON SARKIS AS THE UNIFYING FIGURE IN LEBANON.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

(B) WHEAT FLOUR: WE RECOMMEND PLANNING FOR A SUPPLY OF 100,000 METRIC TONS OF WHEAT FLOUR OVER THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, WHICH WOULD REPRESENT APPROXIMATELY A THIRD OF LEBANON'S PRESENT ANNUAL CONSUMPTION. WITHIN THIS TOTAL, WE RECOMMEND 60,000 METRIC TONS UNDER TITLE I (LOAN). TO PROVIDE THIS AMOUNT AT CONCESSIONARY RATES, A PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION THAT THE FOOD IS NEEDED FOR HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES IS REQUIRED AND CONGRESS WOULD HAVE THIRTY CALENDAR DAYS IN WHICH TO POSE OBJECTIONS.

WE RECOMMEND 40,000 METRIC TONS BE SUPPLIED UNDER TITLE II,
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(GRANT), WHICH WOULD PERMIT INITIAL SHIPMENTS AS EARLY AS LATE OCTOBER, IF SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE WORKED OUT WITH THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT. THE FY 77 BUDGET CONTAINS A PROVISION FOR EMERGENCY RESERVES FOR SUCH NEEDS.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

(C) SATELLITE EARTH STATION: LEBANON ALREADY HAS AN EARTH STATION IN THE METN BATTLE AREA, BUT IT IS OUT OF OPERATION. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO IN ARREARS ON REQUIRED PAYMENTS TO INTELSAT. A NEW PERMANENT STATION WOULD COST UP TO FIVE MILLION DOLLARS AND WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME TO PUT INTO OPERATION. PORTABLE

STATIONS MAY, HOWEVER, BE AVAILABLE FROM SUCH COMPANIES AS RCA OR HUGHES AND COULD BE INSTALLED QUICKLY IN LEBANON. IT WOULD RENT FOR DOLS 5,000 OR MORE A WEEK. A PORTABLE STATION WOULD PUT THE CHRISTIANS BACK INTO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS TRAFFIC.

IN LINE WITH OUR STRATEGY OF BOLSTERING SARKIS' CENTRALITY IN LEBANON, OUR THINKING IS THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO FACILITATE AN ARRANGEMENT TIED TO THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT AND LOCATE A PORTABLE STATION AT BA'ABDA, WHERE SARKIS PLANS TO ESTABLISH HIS OFFICE, WITH LAND LINKS TO BOTH EAST AND WEST BEIRUT. UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT, THE CHRISTIAN SECTOR WOULD STILL BE THE PRINCIPAL GAINER. A PORTABLE STATION HAS THE SINGULAR ADVANTAGE OF BEING SEEN AS A TEMPORARY EXPEDIENT, ENABLING US TO ANSWER MORE EASILY CHARGES THAT WE WERE ASSISTING IN PARTITION. IF FINANCING IS A PROBLEM FOR THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT, WE MIGHT CONSIDER USING THE ME SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FUND.

IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE SOURCES OF FINANCING FOR AN ARRANGEMENT TIED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHRISTIAN SECTOR.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT (1) WE EXPLORE WITH VISITING CHRISTIAN EMISSARIES (PROBABLY DORY CHAMOUN IN THE FIRST INSTANCE AND SARKIS' ENVOY LATER) THE FEASIBILITY OF AN EARTH STATION; (2) OFFER TO INTERCEDE WITH PRIVATE AMERICAN COMPANIES AND WITH THE INTELSAT BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO
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EASE AND SPEED UP SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS; (3) SEE WHETHER A LINK-UP TO THE OTHER SIDE CAN BE WORKED OUT; AND (4) EXAMINE FINANCING.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

(D) FUEL: ANY DIRECT USG ASSISTANCE IN SUPPLYING OR FINANCING FUEL SUPPLIES TO THE CHRISTIANS WILL INEVITABLY BE REGARDED BY THE OTHER SIDE, AND PERHAPS CRITICS IN CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, AS FACILITATING CONTINUED FIGHTING. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT THE U.S. RESPOND NEGATIVELY TO ANY FURTHER CHRISTIAN INQUIRIES ABOUT HELP IN GETTING FUEL.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

(E) EXPANDED HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM: THE HOUSE/SENATE APPROPRIATION CONFERENCE HAS NOW AGREED TO DOLS 20 MILLION FOR RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS IN FY 77, THE AMOUNT REQUESTED BY THE PRESIDENT. THEREFORE, WE WILL HAVE SUBSTANTIAL FUNDS WITH WHICH TO CARRY ON AN EXPANDED RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN PROGRAM, SUPPLEMENTED BY DISASTER

RELIEF FUNDS ON WHICH WE MAY BE ABLE TO DRAW IF NECESSARY. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, CONTINUE OUR HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS NOW UNDER WAY FUNNELLED BASICALLY THROUGH THE U.S. HOSPITAL IN WEST BEIRUT AND THE ICRC. HOWEVER, WE NEED TO DEVELOP NEW AND IMAGINATIVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS CREATED BY THE LEBANESE CRISIS AND POSSIBLY NEW CHANNELS (E.G., SARKIS GOVERNMENT IF ADMINISTRATIVELY CAPABLE AND LEBANESE RED CROSS ON THE CHRISTIAN SIDE) TO MAKE OUR HELP MORE EFFECTIVE AND VISIBLE. WE WOULD WANT TO POSITION OURSELVES TO MEET DEMONSTRABLE NEEDS, RANGING FROM MEDICINE, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, VOLUNTEER MEDICAL PERSONNEL, PUBLIC HEALTH TEAMS, TO EXPERTS OR ADVISERS NEEDED BY SARKIS TO REORGANIZE THE GOVERNMENT FOR POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION. FOLLOWING ARE ILLUSTRATIVE OF WHAT WE COULD DO:

-- WE COULD SEND, IF SECURITY CONDITIONS PERMIT, TEAMS OF VOLUNTEER NURSES FROM THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE UNDER ICRC AUSPICES TO WORK FOR TWO-MONTH PERIODS AT THE AU HOSPITAL,
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THEREBY INCREASING ITS BED CAPACITY FROM THE PRESENT 250 TO 400. THIS PROPOSAL IS BEING FULLY EXPLORED IN A SEPARATE PAPER.

-- WE COULD GENERATE A CAMPAIGN TO ENLIST PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT (WITHIN WELL-DEFINED PARAMETERS). ALSO, AN APPEAL TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD PROBABLY ENCOUNTER A GOOD RESPONSE AMONG LEBANESE AMERICANS AND PHARMACEUTICAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH MIGHT PROVIDE FREE OR AT COST CERTAIN MEDICINES AND VACCINES (WE WOULD WANT TO ESTABLISH VERY CLEAR GUIDELINES AS TO HOW BEST TO USE THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND MINIMIZE COSTS TO THE USG IN A WAY THAT FORESTALLS THE PUBLIC FROM PRESENTING MATERIEL THAT CANNOT BE USED EFFECTIVELY). THE MAIN POINT IS TO BRING AS MANY EFFORTS AS POSSIBLE TOGETHER AS A SINGLE COHERENT INITIATIVE IN RESPONSE TO THE LEBANON CRISIS. THIS COULD BE DRAMATIZED IN A WAY THAT WOULD SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF SARKIS.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS:

-- WE HAVE SENT A MESSAGE TO SARKIS INVITING HIM TO SEND A PERSONAL ENVOY TO WASHINGTON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER HIS INAUGURATION. WE PROPOSE REVIEWING WITH THE ENVOY THESE AND OTHER PROGRAMS HE MIGHT SUGGEST.

-- IN THE MEANTIME, WE RECOMMEND YOU AUTHORIZE US TO EXPLORE WITH THE WHITE HOUSE THE POSSIBILITY OF A PRESIDENTIAL OR WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCEMENT CALLING UPON AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER IN HIS CAPACITY AS THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL COORDINATOR OF INTERNATIONAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO OVERSEE AND COORDINATE US RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON.

SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT COULD BE A VEHICLE FOR SUMMARIZING WHAT THE USG HAS ALREADY DONE AND THE NEW PROGRAMS WE HAVE IN MIND, USING THE DOLS 20 MILLION. FOR POLITICAL REASONS, WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO MAKE SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE TIME OF SARKIS' INAUGURATION AS A TANGIBLE INDICATION OF OUR SUPPORT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SHOULD TRY TO ENSURE-- THROUGH DISCUSSIONS WITH SARKIS' ENVOY COMBINED WITH AN APPRAISAL OF SARKIS' RELATIVE SUCCESS IN THE EARLY PERIOD OF HIS ADMINISTRATION IN MOVING TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT AND IN ACTING AS A UNIFYING FIGURE --
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THAT EXPANDED HUMANITARIAN AND FOOD SUPPLY PROGRAMS COULD BE CARRIED OUT EFFECTIVELY.

-- THE ANNOUNCEMENT COULD INCLUDE A CAREFULLY DEFINED APPEAL TO PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO SUPPORT THE RELIEF PROGRAM.

-- IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE FOR PARKER TO DESIGNATE A SENIOR OFFICER (OR RECRUIT A VIGOROUS OUTSIDER) AS CHAIRMAN OF AN INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE FOR A SHORT PERIOD TO ORGANIZE AND CARRY OUT THE EXPANDED RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS; THE PRIVATE SECTOR COULD PLUG IN THERE.

-- IF IT BECOMES APPARENT THAT PEACE IS TAKING HOLD, WE WOULD COMMENCE PLANNING FOR U.S. PARTICIPATION IN A POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM. (IT IS TOO EARLY TO SPECULATE IN EVEN GLOBAL FIGURES ABOUT THE SIZE OF SUCH A PROGRAM.)

WE RECOMMEND YOU AUTHORIZE US TO EXPLORE THE ABOVE APPROACH IN DETAIL.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

DRAFTED: NEA/ARN:MDRAPER

APPROVED: P - MR. HABIB CLEARED: S:MR. COLLUMS

CONCURRENCES: NEA - MR. ATHERTON AID - MR. PARKER

S/S

ROBINSON

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